

**Delegation of the
United States of America
to the
World Summit on Sustainable Development
Johannesburg, South Africa
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FROM PUBLIC AFFAIRS, EXPORT HOUSE

Assistant Secretary John F. Turner
Presentation at the "Water and Sanitation" Plenary Session
August 28, 2002
Johannesburg, South Africa

Secretary Turner: Madam President, in reflecting on this morning's very excellent discussions, I think a few points merit reinforcement. First, we do believe that successful water management will include managing water in integrated fashions, not only across different sectors, but across national borders. Second, we do believe that safe drinking water is obviously more than the important tasks of providing wells and pumps. It also includes water storage, water basin management -- including basin and ecosystem protection, as was pointed out -- and the important efforts at pollution control. We do believe the WASH Program is a good example of how an integrated health approach can work.

As was also mentioned, we do believe that success depends on commitments and taking ownership by national governments, local municipalities, and small communities. Together we can all do a better job of assisting and empowering these stakeholders to build capacity and establish the elements of good governance, which can lead to coordinated implementation of real solutions. Along these lines we also believe water sanitation and hygiene should be priorities in national development plans. We join everyone here this morning in stating that it is intolerable that too many of our global neighbors lack access to clean water and adequate sanitation. We cannot continue to witness one and a half million children dying each year from diarrhea. On these critical issues there is obviously a lot of energy and interest here this morning and throughout the conference.

Madam President, for the past many months and continuing here at the Summit we have been talking and drafting plans and discussing goals. Although worthwhile, we sincerely

hope that now is the time we can successfully conclude this seemingly endless process and commit to real action. Committing to collective efforts -- to results-oriented initiatives -- to increase access to water and adequate sanitation. Without the commitment of strategic implementations and new resources we do feel our discussions, planning and targets become no more than lofty rhetoric. I am proud that the U.S. will join others in continuing as a world leader in providing assistance for improving access to water and sanitation. The U.S. can and will do more. At this Summit the United States, with other partners, will be proud to announce a specific initiative to improve sustainable management of fresh water resources with the focus on three areas: improving access to clean water and sanitation services, improving watershed management, and increasing the productivity of water.

Madam President, we look forward to opportunities to work with many of our partners here at this Summit to develop collaborative actions to ensure a more positive legacy of water and sanitation for the world's future.

Thank you, Madam President.

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